

seniors first BC

COVID-19 INFORMATION (RISKS, NUMBER OF CASES, SYMPTOMS, PRECAUTIONS, WHERE TO GET HELP, ETC.):

- **COVID-19 INFORMATION:**

- <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>

- Covid-19 updates, prevention and risks, symptoms and treatment, travel advice, and Canada's response.

- **COVID-19 HELPLINE: 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319) OR VIA TEXT MESSAGE AT 604-630-0300**

- Provides non-medical information about COVID-19, including the latest information on travel restrictions and more. Information is available in more than 110 languages, 7:30 a.m. - 8 p.m. Pacific Standard Time

- **COVID-19 BC SYMPTOM SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL AND SUPPORT APP:**

- <https://bc.thrive.health/>

- If you are feeling unwell, you can check your symptoms online. This resource is available 24 hours a day.
 - B.C.'s testing COVID-19 strategy has been expanded to include anyone with cold, influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms, however mild. Call your family doctor, or 8-1-1, or check your Health Authority for information

- **COVID-19 PROVINCIAL SUPPORT AND INFORMATION:**

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support>

- **BC CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL:**

- <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19>

- Includes translated content-<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/translated-content> (traditional Chinese, Punjabi, Farsi, English)

- **COVID-19 SYMPTOM SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL:**

- <https://bc.thrive.health/>

- **8-1-1 HealthLink BC**

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/>

- Free provincial health information and advice phone line operated by HealthLink BC. Callers are connected to a health service navigator, who can help callers find health information or connect them directly with a registered nurse, registered dietitian, qualified exercise professional, or pharmacist. Available 24/7.
- Translation services are available in more than 130 languages.
- For the deaf, hard-of-hearing, or speech-impaired:
 - Teletypewriter (TTY) service call 7-1-1
 - Video Relay Services (VRS) - Real time sign language interpretation by video. Give VRS the number 604-215-5101 to call 8-1-1.

- **REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES**

Visit your local health authority website for information regarding health care facilities, covid-19 updates, and more.

- **Vancouver Coastal Health** <http://www.vch.ca/>
- **Fraser Health** <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/health-topics-a-to-z/coronavirus#.Xn4rqupKi5s>
- **Interior Health** <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/Pages/default.aspx>
- **Island Health** <https://www.islandhealth.ca/>
- **Northern Health** <https://www.northernhealth.ca/>
- **Vancouver Coastal Health** <http://www.vch.ca/>

Tele-Health (Telephone and Online Appointments)

B.C.'s doctors are now available to provide care to patients using telephone or video during the COVID-19 pandemic, in addition to providing in-person care when necessary.

- Patients should call their doctor's office just as they normally would. Medical office staff will book the appointment and tell you how to prepare for the telephone call or video conference. Some doctors' offices have online booking systems, as well.
- Patients should not arrive at their doctor's office without phoning first.
- For seniors living at home, those with disabilities, or people considering themselves to be high-risk, it is especially important that they contact their doctor for advice if they have not already connected.
- Doctors will let their patients know if an in-person visit is needed, and their staff will follow up to make arrangements.
- Doctors are not seeing people in-person as much as usual, but they are still booking appointments, even though they will be different than what patients are used to.
- The virtual appointment is covered by MSP like any visit with the doctor. There is no additional cost for the service.

<https://www.doctorsofbc.ca/news/physicians-bc-now-available-virtual-care> April 3, 2020

Questions & Answers: https://www.doctorsofbc.ca/sites/default/files/virtual_care_patient_faq.pdf

- **COMMUNITY LIVING BC**

Plain Language Update:

[https://mailchi.mp/communitylivingbc/update-for-clbc-eligible-individuals-and-families-on-covid-3238792?e=\[UNIQID\]](https://mailchi.mp/communitylivingbc/update-for-clbc-eligible-individuals-and-families-on-covid-3238792?e=[UNIQID])

Families:

<https://www.communitylivingbc.ca/resources/information-about-the-novel-coronavirus-covid-19/>

Service Providers:

<https://www.communitylivingbc.ca/for-service-providers/information-about-the-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-for-clbc-funded-service-providers/>

- **BEWARE OF SCAMS RELATED TO COVID-19**

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19): Fraudulent phone calls

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/fraudulent-phone-calls.html>

Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre:

<https://antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/features-vedette/2020/covid-19-eng.htm>

Callers who have received a suspicious telephone call can report it by contacting the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre. 1-888-495-8501 (toll free) Monday to Friday, from 10 am to 4:45 pm, Eastern Time.

Online: Fraud Reporting System:

<https://www.services.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/chooser-eng.html?ipeReferer=CAF CFRS>

Your local police department by filing a non-emergency report (do not call 911)

Your local bank/financial institution and credit card company

The National Credit Bureaus to place a fraud alert on your credit reports (Equifax Canada 1-800-465-7166 or TransUnion Canada 1-800-663-9980)

The National Do-Not-Call List at www.lnnte-dncl.gc.ca or 1-866-580-3625

Visit Seniors First BC's [Frauds and Scams Resource List](#) to learn more about COVID-19 frauds and scams.

- **MENTAL HEALTH and WELLNESS**

Crisis Line Association of BC: Phone: 310-6789

Toll-free provincial access to emotional support, information and resources specific to mental health, available 24/7/365

First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line: 1-855-242-3310:

<https://www.hopeforwellness.ca/> 24/7 Toll-free Helpline, provides emotional support and crisis intervention to all Indigenous peoples across Canada. Toll-free Help Line at 1-855-242-3310, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, can use the chat box to connect with a counsellor on-line. Phone and chat counselling are available in English and French. On request, phone counselling is also available in: Cree, Ojibway, Inuktitut.

1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433): For individuals who are or know someone who is having thoughts of suicide. Available 24/7/365 and in up to 140 languages.

COVID -19 Psychological First Aid https://www.psychologists.bc.ca/covid-19-resources?fbclid=IwAR0XPAsW54Siw_VGMERYzsd0CfoANoSATatg0YuXr9fJmmiCSCoG0nwYFf8

A brief (up to 30 minutes) telephone consultation to provide you with information and strategies to help you cope with the stress associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. It is designed to help people who usually cope with daily life pretty well, but who might be feeling overwhelmed during this very stressful time. Free service. Fill in the brief form on the website and a psychologist will call you within 24-48 hours. Calls are returned between 9am and 9pm, 7 days a week. **Please note that wait times may be longer on weekends.*

Mental Health and Substance Use Supports in BC:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/mental-health-support-in-bc>

E-MentalHealth.ca Mental Wellness and Resiliency while Coping with COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Infosheet:

<https://www.ementalhealth.ca/index.php?m=article&ID=62192>

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health - Mental Health and the COVID-19 Pandemic

<https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-health-and-covid-19#top>

New virtual mental health supports for COVID-19 on the way

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2020MMHA0009-000655>

Anxiety Canada:

<https://www.anxietycanada.com/>

Explore self-management strategies like mindfulness, yoga, meditation, art, or exercise to manage anxious thoughts. You can find self-management strategies for anxiety from the Anxiety Canada website.

Here to Help BC:

<https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/infosheet/covid-19-and-anxiety>

Consider tele-health or e-health services, online support, and online or app-based self-management tools. You can learn more and find resources at www.heretohelp.bc.ca. Your doctor's office may also offer tele-health or e-health services. If you need more information about local services or you just need someone supportive to talk to, call the BC Mental Health Support Line at 310-6789 (no area code) at any time.

Bounce Back Online:

<https://online.bouncebackonline.ca/>

Free online Self-directed course from the Canadian Mental Health Association to help people manage low mood, stress, and anxiety.

Free Apps

Mindshift MindShift™ CBT teaches about anxiety, helping users to engage in healthy thinking and to take action. Users check in each day to track their anxiety and work with tools in the app.

Free user-friendly self-help tool by Anxiety Canada <https://www.anxietycanada.com/articles/new-mindshift-cbt-app-gives-canadians-free-anxiety-relief>

- **FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT**

Community Resources for Family Caregivers in BC

Caregiver Support Line (1-877-520-3267) - Monday to Friday 8:30am to 4pm PST

Resources for family caregivers -

<https://www.doctorsofbc.ca/sites/default/files/resourcesforcaregivers-tearsheet.pdf>

- **GRIEF & BEREAVEMENT**

BC Bereavement Line 604-738-9950 Toll free 1-877-779-2223 Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm

Free and confidential service that connects the public to grief support services within the province of BC. Covid-19 resources

<http://www.bcbh.ca/sgevents.php?plD=19>

MyGrief.ca <http://www.mygrief.ca/> online resource to help understand grief. This site was developed by a team of grief experts and people who have experienced significant loss.

Gone too Soon <https://www.bccsu.ca/gone-too-soon-canada-english/>

Handbook developed to help people navigate grief and loss as a result of substance use, written by the British Columbia Centre on Substance Use in collaboration with the British Columbia Bereavement Helpline and the Affected Persons Liaison with the British Columbia Coroners Service.

- **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

If you are in immediate DANGER or fear for your safety, please CALL 9-1-1.

If you are not in immediate danger, call our SAIL (Senior Abuse & Information Line) a safe place for older adults and those who care about them to talk to someone about situations of abuse and mistreatment. Line Tel: 604-437-1940 / Toll Free: 1-866-437-1940 Monday to Sunday, 8am to 8pm. Language Interpretation Available: Monday to Friday, 9am - 4pm

Victim Services Program: The Victim Services Program at Seniors First BC is a community-based program that provides assistance to victims of crime and abuse to older adults over 50. Services are provided whether or not a report has been made to the police. Call us at Tel: 604-437-1940 / Toll Free: 1-866-437-1940 Monday to Sunday, 8am to 8pm. Language Interpretation Available: Monday to Friday, 9am - 4pm

VictimLink BC 1-800-563-0808 toll-free, confidential, multilingual telephone service available across B.C. and the Yukon available 24/7. Provides information and referral services to all victims of crime.

Transition Houses provide short- to long-term shelter (generally 30 days) and related support services to women, children, and youth who have experienced or are at risk of violence. Staffed 24 hours a day, or 7 days a week.

For Transition House Information (Canada-wide search tool - includes accessibility information)

<https://www.sheltersafe.ca/>

BC Housing Transition Houses & Safe Homes List

<https://www.bchousing.org/housing-assistance/women-fleeing-violence/transition-houses-safe-homes>

- **ADDICTION**

Alcohol & Drug Information Referral Service (ADIRS) ADIRS toll-free at 1 800 663-1441, or in the lower mainland at 604 660-9382. Free, multilingual telephone assistance is available 24 hours a day; 7 days a week provides free, confidential information and referral services to British Columbians in need of support with any kind of substance use issue (alcohol or other drugs). Information available from ADIRS includes prevention resources, support groups, and addiction related topics such as fetal alcohol syndrome.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) <https://www.bcyukonaa.org/aboutaa/wanthelp.php>

Online & Video Meetings by community <https://www.bcyukonaa.org/meetings/meetingsvideo.php>

- **LEGAL**

Coronavirus: Your Legal Questions Answered (By People's Law School)

<https://www.peopleslawschool.ca/everyday-legal-problems/health/coronavirus/coronavirus-your-legal-questions-answered>

Preparing or Updating Your Will During Coronavirus

<https://www.peopleslawschool.ca/everyday-legal-problems/wills-estates/wills/preparing-or-updating-your-will-during-coronavirus>

Seniors First BC

Assist older adults age 55+ who have low-income with select legal issues in British Columbia. The Legal Advocacy Program provides legal advice, advocacy and representation to people on legal issues involving tenancy, debt and government benefits. Our Elder Law Clinic provides legal advice and representation to older adults with a focus on legal issues that affect older adults, such as financial abuse, physical abuse or neglect, guardianship issues, capacity issues, issues in assisted living and residential care and appeals regarding government benefits.

<http://seniorsfirstbc.ca/programs/legal-programs/>

Law Society of BC

The Law Society has a dedicated webpage for BC Lawyers who have questions about COVID-19 and impacts to their practice.

<https://www.lawsociety.bc.ca/about-us/covid-19-information/>

- **HOUSING: LANDLORD-TENANT ISSUES**

Residential Tenancy Branch

Updated information regarding COVID-19 and tenancies, including frequently asked questions about landlord and tenant rights, communication tips, and dispute resolution during the pandemic. Topics: Paying Rent, Rent Increases, Accessing Rental Units and Common Areas, Evictions, Cleaning, Disputes, Legal Questions. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/housing-tenancy/residential-tenancies/covid-19>
To support people and prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Province is introducing a new temporary rental supplement of up to \$500 per month to low to moderate income renters, halting evictions and freezing rent increases, among other actions.

- **SAFE SENIORS, STRONG COMMUNITIES - BC 211**

A program that matches seniors who need support with non-medical essentials, to volunteers in their community that are willing to help. To register for services, or to offer help, you can register online <http://www.bc211.ca/safe-seniors-strong-communities/> or **call or text 2-1-1**.

BC211 provides free information and referral to a full range of community, social, and government services, and operates twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. You can call or text 2-1-1, or even chat with an information and referral specialist on their website here <http://www.bc211.ca/contact>
Texting and online chat are limited to 8 am to 11 pm.

Better at Home <http://betterathome.ca/>

Program that helps seniors with simple day-to-day tasks so that they can continue to live independently in their own homes and remain connected to their communities. To find your closest better at home program:

<http://betterathome.ca/map/> or <http://betterathome.ca/organization-directory/>

- **FOOD BANKS**

Food Banks BC <https://www.foodbanksbc.com/>

Find a food bank in communities across British Columbia.

Greater Vancouver Food Bank

The GVFB is committed to our vision for healthy communities through fair and effective food systems, and we proactively work to help alleviate hunger in our communities.

<https://foodbank.bc.ca/find-food/locations/>

Questions 联络方式: 604.876.3601 | cfh@foodbank.bc.ca

Vancouver Coastal Health: Shop by Phone Grocery Program

Provides homebound seniors and disabled adults help with their grocery shopping. Clients call a designated order line to place an order and volunteer grocery shoppers then pick up and deliver the groceries to the client's home.

<https://find.healthlinkbc.ca/ResourceView2.aspx?org=53965&agencynum=17677206>

- **GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL BENEFITS & ASSISTANCE**

FEDERAL:

Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan

Employment Insurance (EI)

Apply for CERB whether or not you are eligible for employment insurance, if you have stopped working due to COVID-19

Employment Insurance (EI) sickness benefits

Assistance provided to those eligible workers who have paid EI premiums and are now laid off due to illness, injury, quarantine, or the need to self-isolate. Amounts upto \$573 per week, covering for up to 15 weeks. One week waiting period has been waived.

Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB)

Emergency support for eligible workers, who had to stop work due to the pandemic which includes self-employed and contract workers not covered by EI and have no access to paid leave or other income support. This gives an assistance of \$2,000 per month that lasts for 4 months.

GST Credit

An additional one-time boost for eligible individuals in April. Benefit is paid out according to your income tax return. [More details](#)

Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB) for students and recent graduates

Canada Student Grants for eligible full-time students will be doubled to up to \$6,000 and up to \$3,600 for part-time students in 2020-21.

Press release: <https://pm.gc.ca/en/news/news-releases/2020/04/22/support-students-and-new-grads-affected-covid-19>

Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) support for businesses (Extended past June)

As a Canadian employer whose business has been affected by COVID-19, you may be eligible for a subsidy of 75% of employee wages for up to 12 weeks, retroactive from March 15, 2020, to June 6, 2020. [Apply online starting April 27, 2020](#)

Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA):

Loans of up to \$40,000 for small businesses and not-for-profits, interest-free for one year. A portion may be forgivable. Eligibility has been expanded to include companies with 2019 payrolls of between \$20,000 and \$1.5 million

Canada Child Benefit (CCB)

For families with children, the government has stated they will increase the Canada Child Benefit with a one-time \$300 payment per child in May.

More details: <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/campaigns/covid-19-update/covid-19-ccb-payment-increase.html>

Support for Seniors

COVID-19 Crisis Supplement: Low-income seniors who receive the B.C. Senior's Supplement will receive an additional \$300/month boost for three months

Existing federal programs continue to be available including Canada Pension Plan Retirement Pension, Canada Pension Plan Disability Benefit, [Old Age Security](#) \$614/mo (max), [Guaranteed Income Supplement \(GIS\)](#) \$916/mo (max), [Allowance/Allowance for Survivor](#) \$1389/mo (max).

Eligible seniors can [apply online](#)

- [Registered Retirement Income Fund \(RRIF\)](#)
 - Reduction in the required minimum withdrawals from Registered Retirement Income Funds (RRIFs) by 25 per cent for 2020
- [Supporting the delivery of items and personal outreach](#)
 - Services could include the delivery of groceries, medications, or other needed items, or personal outreach to assess individuals' needs and connect them to community supports.
 - [Contact your local organization.](#)
- [Providing immediate and essential service to seniors](#)

- Funding is provided under the 2019-2020 New Horizons for Seniors Program community-based stream will be able to use their funding to provide immediate and essential services to seniors impacted by COVID-19.
- [New Horizons for Seniors Program](#)

Taxes

Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) deferred the personal tax return filing date to June 1, 2020. CRA is open to grant more relief from tax penalties on a case by case basis. Payments owed are deferred until August 31.

More details below:

Link: <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/economic-response-plan.html#individual>

- [Access to Credit](#)
- [Business Credit Availability Program \(BCAP\)](#)
- [Canada Emergency Business Account \(CEBA\)](#)
- [Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance \(CECRA\)](#)
- [Rural businesses and communities](#)

● FINANCIAL HELP FROM BANKS & CREDIT UNIONS

Canada's Big Six banks all said they will reduce interest rates on credit cards to provide relief to customers affected by COVID-19 pandemic.

Link: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/big-six-banks-credit-card-interest-rates-relief-covid-19-1.5522343>

Banks and credit unions have announced that they are offering financial relief/ flexibility to those facing difficulties due to COVID-19 on a case-by-case basis

● PROVINCIAL:

[BC COVID-19 ACTION PLAN](#)

BC Emergency Benefit for Workers

In British Columbia, the new [BC Emergency Benefit for Workers](#) will provide a one-time, tax free \$1,000 payment to BC residents whose ability to work has been affected by the outbreak.

Detailed financial support measures in May

Link: <http://bowinnmamla.ca/covid19/supports/>

- a. Climate Action Tax Credit

In BC, 86% of residents will also receive extra money from the [increased and expanded BC Climate Action Tax Credit](#) in July 2020. Eligible families of four will receive up to \$564 and eligible individuals will receive an enhanced payment of up to \$218. BC residents receiving Income Assistance, Disability Assistance, Comfort Allowance, and the BC Senior's Supplement will also [automatically receive an extra \\$300](#) in April, May, and June if they are not receiving EI or the CERB. [See all BC financial supports](#)

- **STUDENT LOANS**

B.C. Student Loans

BC has announced a moratorium on provincial student loan payments for 6 months. No interest will accrue during this time and no payments are required

[Here2Talk](#) is a free, confidential mental- health counselling and referral service for post-secondary students by app, phone, or online chat, 24/7. Call 1-877-857-3397 to speak with a counsellor. [More details](#)

- **CITY TAXES AND UTILITIES**

A lot of Canadian cities have announced that they are allowing the payment of property taxes and utilities to be deferred without penalty. The length of deferral varies by city, but they seem to range from 30 days up to 6 months. Check with your city or municipality

- BC Hydro has introduced a COVID-19 [Customer Assistance Program](#) to help customers experiencing financial hardship during the Coronavirus outbreak and offered 3-month credit.
- Customers facing job loss, illness, or lost wages due to the pandemic can access grants up to \$600 to pay their hydro bills through the [Customer Crisis Fund](#).
- [3- months bill credit through the COVID-19 Relief Fund](#)

- **INCOME & DISABILITY ASSISTANCE**

If you are not receiving federal Employment Insurance (EI) or the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) and are on **BC Seniors Supplement**, Income Assistance, Disability Assistance, or Comforts Allowance, you will *automatically receive a \$300 supplement* on your cheques issued in April, May, and June. *No action is required on your part.* <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/income-assistance/on-assistance/covid>

- **AUTOMOBILE**

Payment deferral up to 90 days with no penalty for customers affected by COVID-19

More details: <https://www.icbc.com/about-icbc/contact-us/Pages/covid-19.aspx>

[Remote extensions](#) for driver licensing available. All requests for medical information [temporarily postponed](#).

People whose learner driver's licences (class 5-8) [expire during the pandemic](#) will not have to pay a fee for their first knowledge test after their learner driver's licence expires, once testing resumes

[Parking](#) is free of charge at all health authority owned/operated health care sites like hospitals, clinics, long-term care centres, etc.

ICBC – (updated April 28, 2020)

To renew your auto insurance, call your Autoplan broker. Many insurance transactions, including transfer of ownership and new policies, can now be done through phone and email. This is temporary to help meet British Columbians' insurance needs without in-person contact.

Additional *temporary* changes are now in effect to help alleviate the financial hardship you may be experiencing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The (\$30) cancellation charge will be waived when you cancel insurance
- The (\$18) plating fee will be waived when you choose to reinstate the policy on your vehicle
- An exemption is available if you would like to insure a vehicle that is usually insured for personal use to allow for the delivery of food and medical products
- Customers on a monthly payment plan who are facing financial challenges due to COVID-19 may defer (i.e. postpone) their payment for up to 90 days with no penalty.

Check the website for further details: <https://www.icbc.com/about-icbc/contact-us/Pages/covid-19.aspx>

● BC BUS PASS PROGRAM

BC Transit and TransLink bus fares are currently suspended (so bus fare is free) *until May 31st*.

Fare collection and front-door-boarding will return June 1st, 2020.

If you are on *Disability Assistance and receiving the BC Bus Pass*: you will automatically receive the \$52 Transportation Supplement on your cheque starting in April and this will continue for as long as BC Transit and TransLink are suspending fares.

● FAIR PHARMACARE

Helps B.C. families pay for eligible prescription drugs, dispensing fees and some medical supplies.

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/health-drug-coverage/pharmacare-for-bc-residents/who-we-cover/fair-pharmacare-plan>

● TELECOMMUNICATION COMPANIES

Bell, Rogers, Shaw, Telus and others are allowing extra leniency and flexibility during this crisis.

Link: <https://www.whistleout.ca/CellPhones/Guides/covid-19-mobile-carrier-response>

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